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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a study investigating the relationship between the extent of elementary school principals' participation in the budgeting process and their job satisfaction. The study also explored the difference between principals' actual and desired role in budgeting. Two studies were conducted, one in 1978 and one in 1988, and were compared to determine differences in principals' involvement and perceptions of their budgeting role and the relationships to job satisfaction. The study created a questionnaire to measure involvement factors and used another instrument, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, to measure dimensions of general job satisfaction. The 1978 study had a response rate of 72 percent, and the 1988 study's response rate was 55 percent. In both studies, the principals were asked four questions to determine their budgetary involvement and influence with supervisors. In the 1978 study, principals who felt they could easily get their ideas across for items affecting their schools showed significantly higher scores in the general satisfaction dimension than did their less influential counterparts. In the 1988 study, there was no significant difference in the job satisfaction of those involved and those not involved. This difference may be attributable to changes in the principal's role; perhaps participation in budgeting is not viewed by central office administrators as the instructional leader's job. Also, the newer principals would not be less satisfied if participation was never offered to them. (MLH)

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Factors Contributing To The Job Satisfaction of Principals

1978 to 1988

A study of how the participation of principals in the managerial process, specifically budgeting, affects their job satisfaction.

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Factors Contributing To The Job Satisfaction of Principals

1978 to 1988

This study investigated the relationship between the extent of principals' participation in the budgeting process and their job satisfaction. A further problem explored was the difference between the actual and the desired role of the principal in the budgeting process. Two studies were conducted, one in 1988 and one in 1978. The two studies were compared to determine the differences in the involvement and perceptions of principals of their role in the budgeting process and the relationship to their job satisfaction.

A questionnaire was created to measure the areas of involvement, the degree of involvement, the desired degree of involvement, and to identify the principals involved and those not involved in the budgeting process. A second instrument used was the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to measure dimensions of general job satisfaction as well as several more specific dimensions of job satisfaction. Ability Utilization, Achievement, Activity, Advancement, Authority, Company Policies and Practices, Compensation, Co-workers, Creativity, Independence, Moral Values, Recognition, Responsibility, Security, Social Service, Social Status, Supervision-Human Relations, Supervision-Technical, Variety,

Working Conditions, and General Satisfaction were the dimensions of job satisfaction measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

The questionnaire, job satisfaction inventory and cover letter were mailed to respondent principals. These principals were selected at random using principals from each elementary school district in Cook County, Illinois excluding the city of Chicago. The study is therefore limited to elementary principals. The return of the 1978 study was 72% and the return of the 1988 study was 55%. In both studies the questionnaires were returned anonymously.

The data were then analyzed using appropriate statistical procedures. The first comparison was to determine if a relationship existed between the job satisfaction of those principals who were involved in four possible levels in the budgeting process and the job satisfaction of those principals not involved in the budgeting process. t-tests were used to determine if differences existed between the identified budget and non-budget involved groups. An alpha level of .1 was set as the level of significance.

The second comparison was to determine if a relationship existed between the actual and desired roles of the principals. Correlated t-tests were used to analyze differences between two groups. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine relationship between pairs. An alpha level of .1 was set as the level of significance.

A third comparison was made between the two studies to determine the possible changes in the ten year period between 1978 and 1988.

This study attempted to confirm participation in budgeting processes increased job satisfaction. The literature states that those who are more satisfied with their job tend to be more effective employees.

This study attempted to identify one dimension, that of participation in the budgeting process, that would increase the effectiveness of the building principal. If a principal is to be the instructional leader in the school, he/she should have some control of the resources and the amount and distribution of dollars for those resources.

The following four questions were asked of the principals to determine those involved and those not involved in the budgeting process.

1. In general, how much say or influence do you have on what goes into budgeted items in your school district?

2. Do you feel you can influence the decisions of your superiors regarding budgeted items about which you are concerned?

3. Do your superiors ask your opinion when a problem comes up which involves items budgeted for your school?

4. If you have a suggestion for an increase or decrease in the budgeted items that affect your school in some way, how easy is it for you to get your ideas across to your supervisors?

The response categories were: 1. None, 2. A Little,

3. Uncertain, 4. Fair Amount, and 5. A Great Deal. The responses in one and two were combined and contrasted with the combined responses in four and five. The uncertain category was eliminated leaving two distinct categories for analysis. Groups one and two were used as the group not involved and groups four and five were used as the group involved in the budgeting process.

For question one the 1978 responses were 48.5% for those not involved and 48.5% for those who were involved. In 1988 the responses were 64.4% not involved and 33.3% who were involved. For question number two the 1978 response was 45% not involved and 51% who were involved. In 1988, 51.1% were not involved and 40% were involved. For question number three in 1978, 39.5% were not involved and 57.5% were involved. For the same question in 1988 those not involved were 46.7% and those involved were 48.8%. For question number four in 1978, 32% were not involved while 58% were involved. In 1988 31.1% were not involved and 62.3% were involved.

In the first three questions there is a noticeable shift in the percent of respondents from the category of involved to the category of not involved. In question number four the percent figures were similar for the two groups. It would appear there is less involvement of principals in three of the four aspects of the budgeting process in 1988 compared to the involvement of principals in 1978. Since the literature states that schools should be moving to Site Based Budgeting,

participative management, etc., this shift toward non-involvement is noteworthy. Perhaps some of the innovative management theories are only in the literature and not in practice in the schools.

The job satisfaction of the two groups, those involved and those not involved, were compared for each of the four questions. In the 1978 study those principals who felt they did have influence on what goes into budgeted items in the school district showed statistically significantly high scores on the dimension of General Satisfaction than those feeling they had little or no influence. The finding in the 1988 study was also significant at the level of .10 compared to the significance level of .01 in 1978.

In the 1978 study those principals who felt they could influence the decisions of their superiors regarding budgeted items about which they had concerns were statistically significantly higher on the General Satisfaction dimension than those who did not feel their opinions were requested. In the 1988 study the finding was exactly the same, with a level of significance of .01 in both studies.

In the 1978 study principals who responded that their superiors did ask the principal for their opinion when a problem came up which involved items budgeted for their school showed statistically significantly higher satisfaction scores in the General Satisfaction dimension then those who were not asked for their opinion. In the 1988 study the superior

seeking the opinion of the principal was not a significant factor in job satisfaction. There was not a significant difference in the job satisfaction of those involved and those not involved.

In the 1978 study those principals who felt they could easily get their ideas across for items that affected their school showed statistically significantly higher scores in the General Satisfaction dimension than those who could not get their ideas across. In the 1988 study there was not a significant difference in the job satisfaction of those involved and those not involved.

While there were several statistically significant results indicated in this study, there are further points for discussion or consideration.

The principals who were involved in the budgeting process showed significantly higher scores in General Satisfaction. In addition, several subscales emerged in each of the four questions dealing with the extent of influence the principal has on the budget process in the 1978 study. The subscales of Achievement, Advancement, Creativity, Independence, Security, Social Service, Supervision-Human Relations, Supervision-Technical, and Variety were statistically significant in all four questions. This finding may indicate that these dimensions cited above are directly affected by participation or non-participation in the budgeting process. However in the 1988 study only the dimension of Advancement was statistically

significant in all four questions.

Another section of the study identified 12 areas of involvement in the budgeting process as gleaned from the literature. The literature concurs that the principal should be involved in budgeting for textbooks, educational supplies, building office supplies, instructional equipment, library books, library equipment, custodial supplies, salary raises for building office personnel, salary raises for building custodians, salary raises for teachers, money available for new or replacement teachers, and physical improvements for their building. In both the 1978 and 1988 studies the correlation coefficients between the actual participation and the desired participation were statistically significant indicating that there is a significant relationship between actual and desired participation in all of the 12 areas. The mean scores for actual participation were lower for the areas of custodial supplies, raises for office personnel, raises for custodians, raises for teachers and to a lesser extent on money for new or replacement teachers, than were the mean scores in the other seven areas. The mean scores for the desired participation were also lower in these five areas and higher in the seven areas of textbooks, educational supplies, office supplies, instructional equipment, library books, library equipment, and improvements to the building. The above results would indicate that while the principals desired to participate more in the budgeting process than

they were actually participating the participation in some areas were of more importance than in others.

Summary and Discussion

The findings of this study indicate less participation based on four questions asked to determine those involved and those not involved in the study of 1988 compared to the study of 1978. Although those principals in the 1978 study showed a significant difference between the job satisfaction of the principals involved in the various aspects of the budgeting process and those who were not involved, the 1988 study showed no significance in two of the four questions, a significance although lesser than the results of the 1978 study in one question, and highly significant differences in one question. In the subscales there were nine that were significant in all four questions in the 1978 study and only one subscale (Advancement) that was significant in all four questions in the 1988 study. (Advancement was one of the nine subscales significant in the 1978 study.) In the 12 identified areas of participation there was a greater desire by the principals to participate more than they were actually participating as indicated in both studies. Only five of the 12 areas had less participation and a desire to participate that was less than those areas that directly affected the instructional program.

There appears to be one very fundamental difference between the

principals who are participating in the budgeting process in 1988 as compared to 1978. Perhaps this is an area for further study or perhaps in this period of time the principal is viewed as the instructional leader and participation in budgeting is not viewed by central office administrators as the job of instructional leader.

The significance of job satisfaction and participation in 1978 and the change to less significance in job satisfaction in 1988 might also indicate that the principals do not consider participation in budgeting as an intregal part of their job. That they also believe an instructional leader does not participate in the budgeting process. It may also be an indicator that the newer breed of principal (a large number of the principals in the sample were not principals in 1978) is not less satisfied if they are not participating since participation was never offered to them. This might be supported by the significant percentage shift in participation between 1978 and 1988. This statement might be further supported by the finding that principals desire more participation than they are actually participating, at least in 12 areas of the budget.

END

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